

A REVELATION OF THE FATHER

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We've been talking for a couple of weeks about focusing more on the receiving end than the giving end.

God's not the problem. He doesn't need to be "moved" ... or begged. We don't need to storm the Gates of Heaven.

The Heavenly Broadcasting Station is broadcasting 24/7. We need to make sure we're tuned in ... we're in receiving mode.

The last couple of weeks we reviewed passages that showed that God is accessible — easily entreated — disposed to be favourable. Last week we looked at God: He is a Good Father — a much-more Father. The one that we can call, Abba!

We will continue this direction a little more.

It's not all about "collecting doctrines". Doctrines are important in a sense ... but our lives are more than just head-knowledge of doctrines. For example ... it may be useful to know about the distinction between the House of Israel and the House of Judah ... that not all Israelites are Jews. Good information ... but unlikely to affect your life day-to-day — health ... relationships ... finances ... well-being ... hopes and dreams.

The much more important purpose to our calling than our reading and studying of God's Word ... but is to come to know God better. Not just know about Him ... academically — but to know Him as an experience.

John 17:1-3 (NKJV)

1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,

2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

That is a key part of our life.

John 17:3 (Passion Translation NT)

3 Eternal life means to know and experience you as the only true God, and to know and experience Jesus Christ, as the Son whom you have sent.

Not just know about ... but to know Him personally. Or is “Father” just another religious title?

Perhaps we “have” the doctrines — but do we “have” the Father? As Father? The much-more Father? Who loves us?

Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NKJV)

23 Thus says the Lord:

“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches;

24 But **let him who glories glory in this,**

That he understands and knows Me,

That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.

For in these I delight,” says the Lord.

So. Don’t boast of your education ... career ... wealth or their position in society. But ... if you know the Father first-hand — then you can glory!

That should be our goal ... not to learn a new doctrine every month — but to come to really know the Father — and the Lord Jesus — in a much more real intimate way.

Religion tends to teach us about God. Theology ... the study of God. But this is a WAY OF LIFE — knowing and experiencing God.

Rather than just imagining what God is like ... the scriptures tell us — show us ... what He’s like. The Word reveals them to us.

Romans 8:31-32 (NKJV)

31 What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** (*God's on our side ... we win*)

32 **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?**

God gave us His Son. Now ... He will freely give us all things.

We often sympathise with Abraham. What a test to give up his only son ... Isaac. Yet — the Father actually had to give up His only Son. It was a huge sacrifice (for both of them).

God has “set the bar” ... giving up His Son. Everything else is almost trivial by comparison.

Let's see what the Apostle Paul had to say about the Father's disposition.

Ephesians 3:14-19 (NKJV)

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 **that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,**

17 **that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,**

18 **may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—**

19 **to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**

Ephesians 3:18-19 (Passion Translation NT)

18–19 **How deeply intimate and far-reaching is his love! How enduring and inclusive it is! Endless love beyond measurement that transcends our understanding—this extravagant love pours into you until you are filled to overflowing with the fullness of God!**

Paul's working hard to ensure we know just how great — how unfathomable — is Jesus' love ... and the Father's love for us. Mind-boggling!

Yet ... for many/most of us ... the love of God goes right over our heads. Dull of hearing perhaps?

We probably need to devote some time to pondering what this means to us?

Ephesians 1:15-21 (NKJV)

15 **Therefore I also**, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,

16 **do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:**

17 **that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,**

18 **the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,**

19 **and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe**, according to the working of His mighty power

20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

This was Paul's prayer. It should be ours too?

Praying For:

- Wisdom
- Revelation
- Understanding

There are enormous spiritual blessings for believers:

- Great Hope
- Glorious Riches as part of our Family Inheritance
- Mighty Power (Resurrection Power!)

But Paul knew the believers in Ephesus were likely to miss all of this —unless given revelation knowledge. Hence the need for prayer!

Us too! Understanding the Father's love ... intimate experience — it won't come naturally. It's a prayer request to the Father.

Ephesians 3:20-21 (NKJV)

20 **Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,**

21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20 (Passion Translation NT)

20 Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. **He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, your most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination! He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energises you.**

It's a great shame if we don't see any of this. If we don't experience the Father's love and provision — always focusing on ourselves ... our failures ... our limitations? We can all look and regret.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NKJV)

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

9 And **He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in your weakness."** Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in weakness, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For **when I am weak, then I am strong.**

God's grace is sufficient. In fact ... it is only when we are weak ... that we can really be strong.

If we think that we can do it ourselves ... this leaves no room for God to show up. Relying on our own strength? And we will fail.

Paul's Motto: "I can't — but You can"!

That's a motto we could use too.

GOD'S PROVISION IS AVAILABLE ... if we look to Him. HE'S WAITING.

1 Peter 5:5-7 (NKJV)

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

“**God resists the proud, (Proud = to be self-sufficient)**

But gives grace to the humble.”

6 **Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,**

7 **casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.**

1 Peter 5:7 (AMP)

7 **Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully.**

1 Peter 5:7 (Passion Translation NT)

7 **Pour out all your worries and stress upon him and leave them there, for he always tenderly cares for you.**

Remember Matthew Chapters 6 and 7. We have a Heavenly Father — a “much-more” Father. He cares — He’s interested — He’s accessible — He’s easy to entreat.

And — talking of a “much-more” Father ... have a look at:

John 10:10 (NKJV)

10 **The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. (*Greek: Perissos)**

John 10:10 (Passion Translation NT)

10 But **I have come to give you everything in abundance, more than you expect — life in its fullness until you overflow!**

*Greek: Perissos. Thayer: Exceeding abundantly ... superior ... extraordinary ... surpassing.

Not talking of a harsh ... judgmental ... difficult-to-reach ... heavenly miser! **Our Father is a generous ... loving God.**

Luke 15:17-24 (NKJV)

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 **I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,**

19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."'

20 "And he arose and came to his father. **But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.**

21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 "But **the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.**

23 And **bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry;**

24 **for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.**' And they began to be merry.

The hero is the father! He was quick to respond — gracious ... kind.

Luke 15:25-32 (NKJV)

25 "Now **his older son was in the field.** And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'

28 "But **he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him.**

29 So **he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends.**

30 But **as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'**

31 "And **he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.**

32 It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for **your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.**’ ”

The father was patient with the other son ... who had a bad impression of his father.

1 John 4:7-8 (NKJV)

7 **Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.**

8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

God is Love. This is addressed to the “Beloved”... to believers.

1 John 4:9-11 (NKJV)

9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

10 **In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

God loved us — and sent His Son.

1 John 4:16 (NKJV)

16 And **we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love,** and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV)

19 **We love Him because He first loved us.**

He loved us first.

It’s probably quite hard for many of us to really understand God’s love? Our physical experiences in our younger years might have been poor.

Or ... we’ve always seen God as rigid ... critical ... judgmental — looking for excuses to condemn us ... always dissatisfied with us ... always demanding more?

It may take some work on our part ... some thinking and pondering to see the Father as he is. Not a distant ... unfeeling ... judgmental being. But someone

who is a personal ... intimate Father — who loves us. And is a much-more Father!

1 John 3:1 (NKJV)

1 **Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!**

Behold! How great the Father's love is. Other translations:

- See! Consider! Look!
- Marvellous Love ... Extravagant Love ... Amazing Love ... Incredible Love.

Again ... John is probably struggling to find the words?

The Apostle John seems to have a good understanding of Jesus' and His Father's love. In a sense ... he practiced it.

John 19:25-27 (NKJV)

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 **When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved** standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"

27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

John 20:2 (NKJV)

2 **Then she (Mary Magdalene) ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved,** and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

John 21:20 (NKJV)

20 **Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved** following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"

This is traditionally believed to be the Apostle John. Rather than naming himself — he saw himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved".

Quite a good insight! But Jesus loved all His disciples — and you and me! We can all claim this phrase — and say it.

Good practice. Look in the mirror — “Hey ... disciple whom Jesus loves”. It’s true isn’t it? “I’m the disciple whom Jesus loves”.

It is part of renewing our mind.

Romans 8:14-15 (NKJV)

14 **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**

15 **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”**

Abba Father ... akin to our modern word, “Daddy”. A close family term — which is exactly what we are.

Definitely worth pondering. It’s our relationship with Abba and His Son Jesus Christ ... which is the key thing ... that matters!